

**MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL**  
**TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2017**  
**6:30 P.M.**

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, July 11, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Ashley Brady presided. Council members Ralph Atkinson, Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt, Joseph Frazier, and Tassie Lewis were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Lakesha Shannon and City Attorney James Brogdon.

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order and Councilman Ralph Atkinson gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Brady welcomed citizens, guests and the press (Hometown TV 8).

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to approve the minutes of the public hearing held on June 13, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.

Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular City Council meeting held on June 13, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Elma Fling, with the Street Department, was named the *June Employee of the Month*. Mayor Brady thanked Mr. Fling for his hard work in helping to keep the City clean.

Blake Sanders, with Alta Planning and Design, presented a working plan for the proposed Marion Hike and Bike Trail Extension. He stated that the City of Marion was one of 16 communities chosen for this project which is funded by the CDC through a grant presented to DHEC. Marion was chosen because of the need for an equity based plan for

access to healthy food outlets. Mr. Sanders stated that the project targets economic development and ways to get people outside. The master plan proposes 10.7 miles of greenway. This project would equal about \$6 million that would create economic opportunities for all ages throughout the trail. Mr. Sanders suggested how abandoned buildings along the trail could be rehabilitated to create opportunities. He also explained the importance of understanding the intersections to help get people across safely, and the significance of signage to highlight distance, location and what's ahead. He added that the sidewalks would be expanded from 5 feet to 10 feet to accommodate walkers and cyclist. Mr. Sanders stated that the City of Marion has an opportunity to capitalize on its existing trail with this project. He stated that a meeting was held to discuss ways to leverage some state and federal funding for this project. Mayor Brady commented that the City has a plan for this project and is currently searching for funding through grants as a next step.

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to appoint Leslie Johnson for a 5-year term on the **Housing Authority Committee**. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker. Councilman Joseph Frazier suggested that committee members attend the Council meeting sometimes so that Councilmembers and citizens are familiar with who they are. Hearing no further discussion, the motion carried.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Ammons explained a request from Revelation Ministries to annex their property on North Main Street into the City. He stated that the recommendation would be forwarded to the Planning Commission if approved by Council. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve the request for annexation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson, motion carried.

Mr. Ammons explained that SCDOT completed a 2-year study of the intersection at Hwy 41-A, Senator Gasque and Metal Road. They have submitted a recommendation to install a roundabout in that area to improve traffic flow. He stated that it would be 2019 before the work begins. Mr. Ammons stated that this project would be funded by SCDOT; however, the City would be allowed to complete some of the landscaping. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to accept the agreement as recommended by SCDOT. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt; motion carried.

Mr. Ammons provided an update on the demolition of Thomas Mobile Home Park. He stated that he met with the property owners and DHEC regarding the status of the demolitions, and they are currently working to obtain the necessary survey and DHEC permit to begin the demolition. Mr. Ammons also reported on various demolitions around the city. He stated that the house on Henry McGill Street has been completed, and demolitions are currently in progress on Fladger Street, Bobby L. Davis Blvd, and Dickson Heights.

### **CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE**

City Attorney James Brogdon had no legal update at this time. He thanked Council for the opportunity to represent the City of Marion and give back to the community.

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt requested that the agenda be amended to receive the Public Comments prior to Executive Session. Councilman Joseph Frazier made a motion to amend the agenda to allow the speakers to present their comments before executive session. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt; motion carried.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Adaya Sturkey and Laura Campbell, founders of Flourish Mentoring Program, were present to request the use of the Opera House at no cost to host their 3rd Annual Back-

to-School Event on August 4, 2017. Ms. Campbell explained the purpose of their program and how it began. She stated that they help young girls ages 13-17 in Marion County by providing various mentoring opportunities. They host monthly workshops that focus on etiquette, hygiene, college preparation, and various topics that are relevant to the girls finding their purpose. They also take the girls on college tours and an annual weekend trip. Ms. Campbell stated that the annual Back-to-School event usually includes about 50-75 girls. During this event, they give out basic school supplies, provide workshops that address various topics, and give out gifts. Ms. Sturkey stated that they also have high school and college students speak to the girls about experiences in those grade levels, and a free breakfast and lunch will be provided to all attendees. She stated that the organization funds all the costs associated with this event; however, they are requesting that Council waive the fee for use of the Opera House to host the event. Ms. Sturkey commented that she hopes this would be the start of a great relationship between their organization and the City of Marion as they work to enhance the lives of the young people in this community.

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt thanked these young ladies for giving back to the community and creating exposure for the young girls in Marion County. He then made a motion to waive the rental fee and allow Flourish Mentoring Program to use the Opera House for the Back-to-School event on August 4, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Mayor Brady stated that Departmental Reports were included in the Council packets.

### **DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR**

Councilman Michael Baker asked Mrs. Ann Burroughs, Executive Director of the Housing Authority, if the police sub-stations in the public housing areas are being utilized.

He stated that he received a call from a concerned tenant in the Bluff Road housing area stating that they never see police presence in the facilities. Mayor Ashley Brady stated that the Police Department would need to look into the issue of having enough manpower to staff the sub-stations. Councilman Baker stated that issue is not just having someone in the sub-station, but having an officer in the general area more often.

Councilman Joseph Frazier thanked Dolly Watts for hosting the upcoming National Night Out on August 1, 2017. He encouraged Council and citizens to come out and see what District #4 is doing.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson asked Chief Tennie for an update on Officer Justin Hardee. Chief Tennie stated that he recently had surgery and is doing fine. He has a slow recovery ahead but he is expected to have a full recover.

Councilmember's Ralph Atkinson and Tassie Lewis had no update.

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt thanked Mr. Ammons, Mayor Brady and the City workers for all they do to help keep the City clean.

Councilman Joseph Frazier asked Mr. Ammons for an update on the list of driveways in the City that need repairs. Mr. Ammons stated that this project will be complete once the funding is available.

Mayor Ashley Brady commended the City workers on their hard work and dedication in keeping the City clean and safe. He commented that there is a schedule in place to address buildings that need to be demolished. He asked that Council make himself and Mr. Ammons aware of any such buildings in their districts. Mayor Brady announced that the City of Marion Recreation Department will be hosting a softball tournament at the Green Street Park on July 14th – 19th. He added that there will be a lot

of visitors in the City during this time. Mayor Brady stated that the City received reimbursement from FEMA in the amount of \$159,060 for expenses incurred during the cleanup following Hurricane Matthew. He thanked Mr. Ammons and City Treasurer Patricia Brown for working hard with FEMA to get those funds.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to go into executive session to discuss a contractual matter regarding the Recreation Department and a personnel matter regarding the Police Department. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Returning from executive session, Mayor Ashley Brady stated that no action was taken. Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to return to regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion allow the Mayor and City Administrator to move forward with the RFP to handle any contractual matters regarding concessions at the Recreation Department. The motion was seconded by Councilman Joseph Frazier; motion carried.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing no further business, Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.

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Mayor Ashley Brady

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City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon

Taped: July 11, 2017